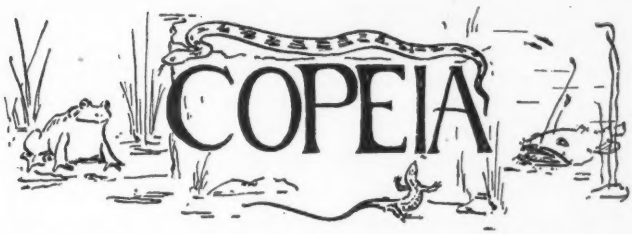
New York, November 20, 1914. No. 12



Published to advance the Science of cold-blooded vertabrates

A NEW RECORD FOR THE PROWFISH.

Zaprora silenus Jordan

In the Proceedings of the California Academy of Sciences of 1896, (page 203, pl. 20), Jordan described as new to Science a species of Scombroid fish which constituted a new genus and family related to the *Icosteidae* but differing from it in having pharyngeal teeth.

In the addendum of the Fishes of North and Middle America, Jordan and Evermann (Bull. 47, U. S. Nat. Mus. Vol. 3, 1898, p. 2850, Vol. 4, plate CLII, fig. 1) it is again described, and it is stated that "only the type, 29 inches long, known."

In Fishes of Alaska, Evermann and Goldsborough, it is mentioned and figured, and the statement is made that it is "known only from 2 specimens, the type and one other now in the Provincial Museum at Victoria, both taken in Nanaimo Harbor, British Columbia."

In "Check List of the Fishes of Canada and Newfoundland," by Andrew Halkett. Naturalist, Department Marine and Fisheries, 1913, p. 77, it states that "only two specimens are known, one from Nanaimo, (the type) which is in the Provincial Museum, Victoria, and the other from the Straits near Victoria, Vancouver Island."

In April, 1914, Captain Andrew Weiding

caught on a halibut trawl in 65 fathoms of water in Lat. 58° 5′ N., Long. 149° W., a specimen of this fish which was sent to the Bureau of Fisheries by Edwin Ripley, fish dealer of Seattle, Washington. As the present specimen, which was 33⅓ inches in total length differed somewhat from the typical description, the following notes upon it are given: Standard length 74cm. Depth, 18.5 cm. Length of caudal peduncle, 4 cm. Depth of caudal peduncle, 7.2 cm. Pectoral rounded, its longest ray 11 cm. Caudal truncate, its longest ray, 11 cm. Pectoral with small scales on base on rays, extending (on middle ray) to 6. 5 cm. Dorsal, anal and caudal scaled at base. Dorsal formula, LIV. Anal, 24. Head, 13.7 cm. Eye, 2.4 cm. Snout, 3cm. Max., 4.5 cm. Interorbital, 5.3 cm. Ground color, gray, lighter beneath, punctulated with black dots. Scales with bluish margins. Dorsal and anal without punctulations. Pectoral dark at base, with dote, distal portion light gray, margin blackish. Caudal whitish at edges and towards end, after margin blackish. Pores of head, white. Forehead grayish. Yellow spot in upper axil of pectoral. B. F. tag no. 9547.

WILLIAM C. KENDALL,
U. S. Bureau of Fisheries.

COMPARATIVE NUMBERS OF LIZARDS AND SNAKES ON DESERT.

Lizards are the most abundant form of desert reptile life. They greatly outnumber the snakes both in point of individuals and species. In the summer of 1913, the writer saw only three species of snakes on the Painted Desert, Arizona. These were the prairie rattlesnake (*Crotalus confluentus*), bull snake (*Pituophis sayi*), Arizona ribbon snake (?) (*Eutaenia megalops*).

Among the lizards which are abundant may be mentioned: Bailey's Collared Lizard, Leopard Lizard, Racerunners, Swifts and Horned Lizards.

DWIGHT FRANKLIN,
New York, N. Y.

MUD TURTLE ATTACKED BY CRAB.

Canoeing in the muddy shallows of a creek at Mastic, Long Island, with Mr. Alan S. Nicolay on August 29, 1914, a large Blue Crab was observed firmly holding a Mud Turtle (*Kinosternon pennsylvanicum*) of perhaps more than half its size, one of whose feet waved helplessly above the surface. The crab probably had it by the neck, and the encounter might well have ended disastrously if not interrupted.

The waters at Mastic are rather unusual. The creek where the encounter took place, though directly tributary to brackish Moriches Bay, is, judging from the water plants, almost, if not quite, fresh. The writer has taken the Painted Turtle in it. The Snapping Turtle is common in the Mastic Region; Spotted Turtles are abundant in narrow, more or less fresh creeks in the brackish meadow; the Mud Turtle is frequently seen and the writer has found it on the beach side of the bay. A fisherman at Brookhaven, whose numerous stock of Diamond-backed Terrapin were examined says that this part of the bay is excellent for that species. The Box Turtle is common in the woods, but the writer has never found the Wood or Musk Turtles in the vicinity.

Mr. Waldron De W. Miller considers the latter species definitely less coast-wise than the Mud Turtle in the vicinity of New York. He finds it at Plainfield, N. J., where he has not taken the Mud Turtle, which he has, however, found in the Cheesequake Marshes, lower Raritan River Marshes, and at Sandy Hook, N. J.

J. T. Nichols,
New York, N. Y.

AMBYSTOMA TIGRINUM IN SOUTH DAKOTA.

Last summer, during the month of August, the writer lived among a number of Wahpeton Sioux, residing about Drywood Lake about ten or twelve miles from Sisseton, S. Dakota. The abundance of the tiger salamander *Ambystoma tigrinum* in Drywood Lake, and indeed in all the ponds thereabouts, was

notable. Both forms occurred, the axolotl phase dwelling in the water, and the salamander phase on the land.

After a rain, or in the morning while the ground was still heavily bedewed, numbers of these salamanders could be found crawling over the prairie, especially along the roads. I have seen as many as seven in the course of a couple of miles, and their mangled bodies were often seen where they had been run over, sometimes as much as half a mile from the lakes.

These salamanders delighted in burrowing in the mounds of loose black earth cast up by the pocket gophers on the prairie. They often covered themselves, leaving only the tip of the nose exposed. If irritated, they would slowly lash their tails, which would exude abundant drops of a thick white milky fluid. The Indians believed this to be poisonous. Great variation in the coloring of these salamanders was observed, some being almost uniformly dull olive, others plainly and strikingly barred with yellow. No specimens under five or six inches in length were observed, and most may have been eight or even nine inches long.

ALANSON SKINNER,
New York, N. Y.

Edited by J. T. NICHOLS, American Museum of Natural History
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